

# Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group Meeting

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October 12, 2011 - Phoenix, AZ

## **Attendance**

AICG members – Pam Bostwick, USFS (Chair); Dale Glenmore, BIA Navajo Region (Vice Chair); Jeff Hickerson, NPS; Judy Palmer, FS; Rod Lopez, FWS; Glen Buettner (for David Geyer), AZ State; Keith Burnette, BIA Western Region; Dolores Garcia (for Kelly Castillo), BLM; and Ron Sherron, FS-Smoke Coordinator.

## **Review and Approval of the last AICG Meeting Notes**

The January 20, 2011 meeting notes were approved as distributed, and will be posted on the Committee's website by Pam.

## **Membership Updates**

Judy Palmer, Fuels Specialist from the A-S NF replaces Clay Templin as the FS Representative. Pam Bostwick, USFS Region 3 Fuels Specialist replaces Clay Templin as the AICG Chair.

## **Approval of Meeting Notes from January 20, 2011**

There were no corrections to the meeting notes from January 20, 2011. They will remain as posted on the AICG website.

## **Navajo Region Signature on Interagency Agreement**

Dale Glenmore will look into this.

## **Status of BIA Smoke Position – Ron Sherron**

Doreen Gatewood is the new hire. She is from White Mountain and should be on board within 1 – 2 weeks. She has a wildlife background and a Master's Degree in Natural Resources Management. Her supervisor will be with the BIA.

Jeff Hickerson will look into roles and responsibilities between the two smoke coordinator positions in the MOU and Interagency Agreement. There appears to be some confusion in how this will work.

## **FY 2012 AOP Discussion**

The funding is now exchanged between the BIA, FWS and NPS.

Keith Burnette will work on this and discuss with Ron Sherron, as Ron has developed these in the past.

## **AZ Interagency Smoke Management Program Update – Ron Sherron**

The DOI Smoke Coordinator position has been filled. Doreen Gatewood was selected and comes from Fort Apache. She should be in place within 1 – 2 weeks. She has a wildlife background with a Masters Degree in Natural Resources Management.

Now that this position is no longer funded by both the FS and DOI, questions came up about how this person will function in the day-to-day environment. AICG agreed that this person should be able to sit on any committee, go to any meeting and be able to represent the interagency community as needed. Jeff Hickerson said that he would look through the MOU and Agreement for information on this. A Delegation of Authority could allow for this type of representation.

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Ron indicated that in the last 1 – 2 months, there have been several complaints about smoke in AZ. These are not typical complaints. They are oriented towards visibility and recreation. In the past, these types of complaints would not receive much attention from ADEQ but they do now. For example, there were 50 complaints from Globe, AZ and there have never been complaints from Globe before now.

The ADEQ has warned Ron that forest and land management are under scrutiny and there is much blame being placed on the FS regarding mismanagement of wildfires. The state legislature has had after action meetings which representatives from the A-S NF and others have attended.

Ron has placed monitors out in areas where complaints are originating as research. The ADEQ is assisting with the monitoring.

There is a need to address who is answering the phones and how questions are being answered at the unit level.

Press releases are still referring to “managed fire” instead of just “wildfire” and when this is the message, the public wants the fires to be extinguished. Press releases do not address cost benefits, ecological benefits, the value to the public and the safety benefits of different types of responses associated with wildfires. They just seem to provide the same old general information every time.

Early on in fire season, there were some good press releases and then there were no more as the season progressed to drive home the messages.

There need to be large statewide campaigns to get a message out, not just individual unit or agency messages. Wildfire talking points were developed by AZ forests in the spring of 2010 and endorsed by the AICG but these appear to not be in wide use. Ron will revisit these talking points with the forests to determine if they need to be updated and redistributed. Once revisited, Ron will share with AICG.

Scott Hunt could be helpful in connecting with the Governor’s office. The AICG could help to coordinate and implement education efforts with this type of audience. These efforts could include a tour of areas that have been treated and threatened by wildfires and presentations such as during an AICG meeting.

Monitors may be set up near HonDah when the tribe starts to burn in order to get ahead of the anticipated complaints.

### **Update from Firewise Sub-Committee – Dolores Garcia**

The Fire Prevention/Education Conference to be held in Albuquerque, NM would be a good opportunity to share information through PIO and Fire Prevention channels. Dolores will send an announcement to work on increasing interagency participation in this event.

The Firewise subcommittee postponed updating a charter because they were unsure if the AICG would remain intact. Members will pursue a rewrite of the charter and they are considering changing the name of the subcommittee.

The next meeting will include development of talking points.

Dolores will send an announcement through the AICG to encourage more interagency participation in this committee. Current participation comes from the NPS and BLM.

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There is a lack of FS RO support to address prevention and education elements. Past efforts by the AICG to encourage participation have resulted in no change.

The BLM has chosen to assist the community of Portal in the development of a CWPP, even though there is almost no BLM land in the area. Without a CWPP or equivalent, communities are excluded from many grant funding opportunities.

### **Communities at Risk/CWPP/WWRA Update – Glen Buettner**

Glen submitted a grant proposal for funds to support the AZ smoke database development/completion. If awarded, the funds will be available in the spring of 2012 at the earliest. If not awarded, AICG will need to work on next year's proposal to address any of the reasons why it was not awarded this time.

Work continues on the development of CWPPs including Yuma, Southern Gila, Maricopa (signed off), Pima, Mt. Lemon, Colorado River and others. All agencies and tribes should have a CWPP or equivalent in place. These are necessary in order to obtain fuels funding.

The community of Portal needs FS assistance in the development of their CWPP.

Glen is working on a map update of AZ CWPP status.

The State plans to look at the final West Wide Wildfire Risk Assessment product when it is available to determine if there will be a way to update/reassess the results for AZ. The intent is to provide updates based on science that will support existing decisions.

### **Snapshot submittals – Pam Bostwick/Jeff Hickerson**

No new Snapshot submittals this past quarter. Agencies should continue to encourage their field personnel to submit documentation of collaborative projects.

The BLM has been trying to revitalize obtaining snapshots.

Pam will revisit letter written by Jeff in 2010 to encourage agencies to submit Snapshots.

### **Agency Updates**

#### **Navajo Region – Dale Glenmore**

Vacancies: Fuels, AFMO and possibly a 9/11 GIS position

The Fuels Tech is attending the UNLV 401 program

RX Fire: Pine Tail and Cat Ridge

#### **NPS**

Vacancies: FMO South Rim (not yet advertised), Grand Canyon FMO (will be retiring in January), Kristi Lund, Saguaro FMO (moved to the FS), El Malpais FMO

RX Fire: Grand Canyon is burning piles in snow

#### **FWS – Rod Lopez**

Vacancies/Position Updates: Buenos Aires AFMO, Hired a Prescribed Fire Specialist

RX Fire: Pile burning now, San Bernardino later in month

#### **BIA Western Region – Keith Burnette**

Vacancies: Ft. Apache FMO

RX Fire: Ft Apache, Corduroy, Hon Dah (expect smoke complaints due to Hon Dah burning)

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Other: Fuel treatment effectiveness report was prepared by Ft. Apache for the Wallow Fire

### **FS – Pam Bostwick/Judy Palmer**

Vacancies: Gila Fire Staff, A-S Fire Staff

RX Fire: Many burns planned across AZ forests in the fall but primarily pile burning now

### **Next Meeting/Adjournment**

The next meeting will take place on January 5, 2012 at 9:30 a.m. in Phoenix. The room location will be announced at a later time.

### **Upcoming Training/Conferences**

- October 19 – “Fuel Treatment Effectiveness on the Wallow Fire” webinar
- November 1 – 3 – Fire Prevention/Education Conference in Albuquerque, NM
- February 27 – March 1, 2012 – SW Fire Ecology Conference in Santa Fe, NM
  - If registered to receive credit, attendance at this conference will serve as an equivalent for RX-310
- Arizona Wildfire and Incident Management Academy – RX-301 and RX-341
- RX-410 – Not scheduled this year in AZ or NM
- Online Smoke Training is available at  
[http://frames.nbii.gov/portal/server.pt/community/smoke\\_management\\_and\\_air\\_quality\\_for\\_land\\_managers/838](http://frames.nbii.gov/portal/server.pt/community/smoke_management_and_air_quality_for_land_managers/838)